

The COMMONWEAL

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War Easter

THERE are many Americans this Easter who find it well-nigh impossible to rejoice as they are enjoined to. It is hardest of all for those who have to transcend personal sorrow, some agony of loss or separation, some deep anxiety for a loved one whom war has torn from home and family. For them it is indeed far easier to accompany Christ and His Cross to Calvary. Yet it is scarcely less difficult for any sensitive Christian to rejoice this Easter in the face of a world of suffering, of inhuman cruelty and cold-blooded starvation, a world of bombs and torpedoes, of pogroms and blockades, a world in which the only answer that has been found to forcible enslavement seems to be the slow grinding of even greater powers of destruction. How can a member of Christ's Mystical Body rejoice this Easter when he thinks upon the daily headlines and the mass slaughter of his fellow-creatures which lies immediately ahead?

It is only by grasping the basic meaning of Easter. No sentimental lightening of the heart at the realization that spring and warmth and leaves and blossoms are coming forth again. It is rather the reminder of Christ's victory over sin and death. The Resurrection, foundation of our faith—and of Christian hope—is the evidence of the

ultimate justice in time and in eternity. The Resurrection means that no prayers or sacrifices or sufferings of the innocent in these tragic times shall have been in vain. And so in the midst of this terrible war of desolation we put our trust in God's Providence, although we cannot see what lies ahead. "He is risen," and we lift up our hearts.

A Veto Needed

FOUR WEEKS ago we protested in very strong language against a piece of legislation known as "H.J. Res. 96." This is an appropriation bill providing funds for transporting farm labor needed in various parts of the country, at present unemployed in the sections where it normally resides. By whatever name, it is a vicious piece of legislation. It has passed both House and Senate, and the only hope of those who reverence the American concept of freedom is that the President will veto it.

The ostensible purpose of this bill is good. In some parts of the country there is what might be described as a seasonal surplus of farm labor. This is particularly true in the Southern States, in the cotton belt. For six months of the year this labor has substantially nothing to do, and by the system long in vogue in those parts, it is kept cheap by being kept constantly in debt to its employers. This labor is desperately needed for the production of food in other parts of the country. Yet the Southern farm owners do not want it moved for fear it may get out of debt, or might even get on its feet economically and stay away from home.

It is a national disgrace that short-staple cotton is being raised right now anyhow; it is worse than a disgrace that by law "free" American citizens should be kept tied to their present degraded standard of living and their present economic subserience. This is precisely what this bill as now amended and passed seeks to do.

Two of its provisions are so bad as to seem almost incredible. The first states that none of the funds appropriated shall be expended "for the transportation of any worker from the county where he resides or is working to a place of employment outside of such county without the prior consent in writing of the county extension agent of such county, if such worker has resided in such county for a period of one year or more immediately prior thereto and has been engaged in agricultural labor as his principal occupation during such period." Given the conditions that exist in the South, with employers controlling all public agencies and agents, such a provision adds up to peonage.

It is further provided that none of the funds appropriated shall be used in any way whatever

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to impose minimum wages or housing standards or regular hours of work or do anything else which could improve the condition of our most depressed labor. An exception, however, is made for foreign workers imported into the United States, where terms of employment can be arranged with foreign governments. Not only are American workers to be allowed to rot, precisely as their employers see fit, but insult is added to injury, and foreigners are to be protected in accordance with the bargaining power of their home governments.

"Gremlins in the Kremlin"

WE BORROW our title from Christopher Morley, who as a member of the editorial board of the Book of the Month Club pulled a neat little trick to show that at least one of the protestors against Mark Aldanov's "The Fifth Seal" had not even read the book. Actually this novel, the May selection of the Club, is a somber satire on political conditions in the years before the final outbreak of this war; everybody comes in for a ribbing—at least all Europeans do. It happens that there are more Soviet characters in the book than there are Frenchmen or Germans, and so the Soviets get a little more ribbing than do the others, but it is all friendly enough, and it would seem to us far more the sort of thing to make us understand and like the new Russians than to make us suspicious of them. Here they appear as human beings, and neither as mystery-men or men-of-steel—both types of mythological creature highly esteemed, perhaps, by the Comrades, but scarcely calculated to inspire the rest of us with confidence.

Probably the trouble is that anyone who has allowed his mind to be captured by a political ideology loses in the process all sense of humor and proportion, and hence a gentle ribbing is tantamount to the most horrid attack, since it is subtle and likely to provoke a smile. In a sense the whole fuss does no more than prove that the CP has no ability to laugh, but only to sneer, and that scarcely needed proving. But it does do something more. Among the protestants, very few of whom could possibly have read the book, there were a number of labor unions and intellectuals. This is plain and disturbing irresponsibility.

Forgotten Sectors

EVEN THE gloomiest of our observers has to admit that the Axis, East and West, has passed its peak. And now that we are arming to the teeth the immediate threat of further aggression is subsiding. The big question that remains has to do with the possibilities of decisive Allied victory. Is it probable, and if so how far off? What are the best avenues of attack? It is the strategists who will decide as to the most efficient weapons

and when and where to attack, and in what force. But there are other besides strictly military factors which have a tremendous bearing on the outcome.

One of these is the spirit in which we train, produce and fight. This is the area where formulation of positive war aims is all-important. It is the sector where grave doubts persist among vast number of our population. The introduction of so many resolutions committing the United States to participation in the governance of the world after the war has been encouraging, although none of these resolutions—of which the Ball-Burton-Hill-Hatch is perhaps the best—has yet been acted upon favorably. But a Gallup sampling of the Senate only the other day indicates a preponderance of senatorial opinion against an international police force—as if any world federation could endure without the power to thwart by force the first major aggressor. Do we mean to establish lasting peace or don't we? We never shall if we do not commit ourselves now we are at war.

Then there is the matter of the four freedoms and our own inconsistency here at home. How can we expect the American Negro to believe in the cause for which we are fighting when in certain states he is denied even the right to vote? He knows that there is a Black Army and a White Army, that there are Black Waacs and White Waacs and that no Negroes need apply for the Waves and Spars. He is the constant victim of discrimination. Do we really mean to liberate the peoples of the world when we treat one-tenth of our population as a menial race apart? Perhaps we cannot expect everything to change overnight, but the formation of a mixed division or two—possibly beginning with those who would volunteer for the same—would boost the national morale.

This brings us to the question of potential allies. There are the colored races of the globe who need convincing that this is a war of liberation. There are the peoples of the other Americas not yet delivered from the suspicion that a new exploitation of Latin America is already in the making. There are the telltale evidences that rugged capitalism and imperialism are far from dead. And finally there are the peoples of the conquered countries of Europe whom we expect to welcome us with open arms. They are people whom in the pursuit of military objectives we are bombing with increasing intensity, while our papers tell us that they pray for our bombers to come. Many of them are dying of starvation, but we refuse to lift a finger. Food, ships, money there are in abundance and we let them die. Who will be there to greet us on the day of liberation?

Our friends and allies die or grow despondent and many citizens go half-heartedly about their duties. Yet we claim we are bending every nerve toward the winning of this war. The longer we neglect these and similar things, the more costly and problematical will ultimate victory be.

Government

AT ONE TIME it was the fashion for stage scenery to show three or four rooms of a house on the stage at once as if they were rooms in a doll's house. The lights would go on in one room and the action would take place in that room. Then the lights would go off in that room and on in another room and the action would take place in the other room. Across the street from this office the boys and girls act for eight hours a day in a play called "New York Life Insurance." They walk up and down, they carry papers from one desk to another, they dictate and typewrite and telephone. It is a play that goes on day after day and year after year. Once a day at eight thirty the players appear; once a day at four thirty they disappear. Once a year a Christmas tree is brought in on the set. Surely the play follows some wise design. But what they do over there is as meaningless to us as what they see us do must be to them. For we too act a play.

We are all actors playing our parts. We all know what we are doing. The trouble is we do not know what the others are doing.

Saint-Exupéry's "Little Prince" watches a train go by in the night. "What are they seeking?" he asks. "Not even the engineer could tell you," replies the switchman.

* * *

Governments and commentators are wonderful. Generals are wonderful. Without the governments and the generals the troops would not know where to go, the ships would not be there to carry the troops, there would be no supplies for the troops to employ. Without the commentators and the press we would not know where the troops had gone and what they were doing. Without governments nations could not act as nations. Without the commentator — the historian — nations would not know that they were nations.

All over the world men are fighting. They have left their homes; they are soldiers. In disciplined ranks, with an intelligible purpose, Germans, Americans, Indians, Frenchmen, Japanese, York-shiremen, New Zealanders, Canadians, Russians advance, retreat, bomb, crash, invade, resist, fight under the moonlight, under the nooday sun, on the sea, under the sea, in the air, on land. It is not the fact that they are fighting which is amazing. At home, they might be fighting with their fists, with knives, with guns, in race riots, in revolutionary riots, over women, in defense of some truth more valuable than life. It is not that they have freely accepted to fight as soldiers. In most cases they have given their full consent. It is not that they fight deliberately, knowing why. In a limited sense the issue of this war—the pur-

pose of the Germans to dominate, the refusal of the others to be dominated by the Germans—is clear for anyone to see. It is not the emotion, the purpose, the consent, the bravery, which are amazing. What is amazing is that these emotions, the pure and the impure, these purposes, the evil and the just, this consent to oppress and to defend, this world-wide bravery should fit into so intricate, so delicate, so intellectually adjusted a pattern of warfare ordained by government.

The factories, the transport, the fronts, the timing of the seed which will grow into wheat, the cattle driven to the abattoir—and then the fire, the heat to turn this raw meat, this dry grain into food. The maps, the compass, the tactics, the strategy. The trains running exactly on time. The ships leaving the docks, the escort meeting the ships at the right point, the determined time. The orders by wireless. And everything put down on paper, planned on paper, every man in every army accounted for on paper. The conscription, promotion, necrology on paper. The assembling of reserves for the reserves. The battle planned for 1944.

It is the existence of government which is amazing. I know we elected the President, we elected the Mayor. I know where Hitler came from and I know the sequence: Czar, Kerensky, Lenin, Stalin. I have heard the history of the English kings and that of the French kings, the French Revolution, the French Empire, the French Republics, the Commune, the Restoration. I know about the Risorgimento. I know the taxpayers pay the salaries of the cops in New York. I know about the senators and the representatives, about the War Department, the Navy Department.

I know about the need for government and that anarchy is a wonderful dream, and there are books that tell how government came to be formed, but when you look at government now there is no book that expresses man's amazement before this extraordinary thing he has created. It is a writer's job to explain and to exhort. A writer for a magazine tells the generals where to go, the governments what to do. But, this week, this writer looks at President Roosevelt, President Camacho, Mr. Stalin, King George, Mr. Churchill, Admiral Robert, Generals Eisenhower, Montgomery, Rommel, looks out the window at a cop on a horse, and is so amazed that these people are where they are at all, so astounded that they are giving orders, and making plans and acting, that he will give them no advice. Just for once.

* * *

"Little Prince," earth visiting from a distant planet, when you ask where the trains are going, where the planes are flying, at whom we aimed the guns, address your questions to the governments.

C. G. PAULDING.

Science and Human Affairs

A report on recent utterances
by two distinguished scientists.

TWO presidential addresses intended for delivery before two famous scientific societies, in recent months, possess a range of interest which extends far beyond those before whom it was originally intended that they should be spoken. In his address to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Professor E. T. Whittaker, the distinguished English mathematician, speaking to the title "Aristotle, Newton, Einstein," dealt essentially with the modern revolution in physics by which relativity and quantum mechanics have displaced the concepts of Newtonian mechanics, comparing this with the revolution in the seventeenth century when Newtonian mechanics triumphed at the expense of Aristotelian Scholasticism.

Dr. Irving Langmuir, Associate Director of the General Electric Company, Nobel prizeman in chemistry, and retiring president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, addressed his remarks, owing to the postponement of the Association's annual meeting at New York upon request of the Office of Defense Transportation, not to the members of the Association but, by radio, under the auspices of "Science Service," to all who might listen. Dr. Langmuir was equally concerned with the concepts of modern physics and indicated that they have something to contribute to his theme "Science, Common Sense and Decency."

Professor Whittaker considered principally those changes arising from modern concepts of physics which modify the fundamental and independent status accorded to space and time by Newtonian mechanics, a basic postulate which differed sharply from the views of the Scholastics. As reported in *Nature* (January 9, 1943) "a partial return to the Aristotelian view that all change is a transition between a state which is potential and a state which is actual came with the doctrine of the conservation of energy, in which force is ignored and a change is represented by a transition between potential and other forms of energy; and this tendency has been emphasized by the quantum mechanics in which the (mathematical) operator corresponding to classical potential energy is closely akin to the Aristotelian concept of potency. . . . The introduction of 'minimum' principles . . . marked another drift back to Aristotelianism, since such principles, like Aristotle's, are essentially teleological. General relativity, according to which gravitation represents a continual

effort of the universe to straighten itself out, is so completely teleological that it would have delighted the hearts of the Schoolmen." Professor Whittaker further emphasizes that "the peculiarities of modern statistical theory also are conveniently expressible in Aristotelian language. . . . This reopens the question which engaged so much attention in the Middle Ages, regarding the nature of *universals*, or general terms, which represent the basis of a class of individual objects."

"These tendencies of modern physics," Professor Whittaker considers, "should lead to more intercourse and mutual understanding between men of science and philosophers; for of all types of philosophy, the Aristotelian-Scholastic is, in its principles, the most congenial to the scientific mind. It is in a sense true that correct, even if in some respects limited, knowledge regarding physics can be combined with any view whatever on the fundamental questions of being and reality, but the effect of such segregated thinking has been to make science a departmental affair, having no influence on science and thought except indirectly through its applications. At the present time there is a movement in scientific circles aiming at securing for science a greater influence on human affairs, and even calling for a refounding of civilization on a scientific basis; but its advocates do not always understand that, as a necessary condition for the possibility of such a reform, science must be reintegrated into a unity with philosophy and religion."

Such a reintegration is necessary because, as Dr. Langmuir points out (*Science*, January 1, 1943): "Human affairs are characterized by a complexity of a far higher order than that encountered ordinarily in the field of science." "From the viewpoint of the early classical scientist, the proper field for science was unlimited. Given sufficient knowledge, all natural phenomena, even human affairs, could be predicted with certainty (Ampère). . . . Practically, of course, such predictions of the future would be impossible because we could never hope to get the necessary knowledge nor the time to carry out such elaborate calculations." . . . "For many years, up to about 1930, the new physics based upon the quantum theory seemed to be fundamentally irreconcilable with the classical physics of the previous century. Through the more recent development of the uncertainty principle, developed by Bohr and Heisenberg, this

conflict has now disappeared. According to this principle, it is fundamentally impossible to measure accurately both the velocity and the position of any single elementary particle. It would be possible to measure one or the other accurately but not both simultaneously. Thus, it becomes impossible to predict with certainty the movement of a single particle. Therefore the earlier estimate (Ampère's) of the scope of science has lost its basis."

How, then, did classical physics lead to its own definite clear-cut laws? Langmuir points out that "the simplest answer is that the classical physicist naturally chose as the subjects for his studies those fields which promised greatest success. The aim of the scientist was to discover natural laws. He therefore carried on his experiments in such a way as to find the natural laws, for that is what he was looking for. He was best able to accomplish this by working with phenomena which depended upon the behavior of enormous numbers of atoms rather than upon individual atoms. In this way the effects produced by individual atoms averaged out and became imperceptible. We have many familiar examples of this effect of averaging—the deaths of individual human beings cannot usually be predicted, but the average death rate in any age group is found to come close to expectation." However, in the investigation of the behavior of single atoms which the scientist can now undertake since the discovery of the electron and the quantum, it has been found that "these phenomena depend upon the laws of probability and that they are just as unpredictable in detail as the next throw of a coin." In large numbers, the behavior of the group is definitely determined by the probability of the individual occurrence and therefore would appear to be governed by laws of cause and effect.

* * *

Langmuir distinguishes therefore between two types of natural phenomena. The first class of phenomena he calls "convergent phenomena" in which the behavior of the system can be determined from the average behavior of the component parts. The second class, "divergent phenomena," contains those in which a single discontinuous event becomes magnified in its effect so that the behavior of the whole aggregate does depend upon something that started from a small beginning. Classical physics applies to the first and modern physics based on quantum theory to the second. Langmuir discusses many fascinating examples of the divergent phenomena. The cloud track formed by the emission of an alpha particle from radium into air supersaturated with water represents a group of divergent phenomena. The single unpredictable event, the ejection of one particle from radium "led to the production of countless thousands of water droplets and these made the track of the alpha particle visible and led to

its reproduction in a photograph. . . . The photograph may therefore be published—may start discussions among scientists that involve thousands of man hours—may delay one of them so that he misses a train on which he might otherwise have suffered a fatal accident. Examples of this kind, any number of which could be given, show that it is possible for single unpredictable quantum events to alter the course of human history. . . . Every thunderstorm or tornado must start from a small beginning and at least the details of such storms across the country would be modified by single quantum phenomena that acted during the initial stages. Yet small details such as the place where lightning strikes or damage occurs from a tornado may be important to a human being. . . . It is known definitely that changes in genes or mutations can be produced by X-rays and it has even been proved that a single quantum is sufficient to bring about such an alteration. . . . An idea that develops in a human brain seems to have all the characteristics of divergent phenomena. All through our lives we are confronted with situations where we must make a choice and this choice may sometimes alter the whole future course of our lives."

It is obvious to Langmuir that, when we consider the nature of human affairs, "divergent phenomena frequently play a role of vital importance. It is true that some of our historians cynically taught most of our college students from 1925 to 1938 that wars, the rise and fall of a nation, etc., were determined by nearly cosmic causes. They tried to show that economic pressure, and power politics on the part of England or France, etc., would have brought the same result whether or not Kaiser Wilhelm or Hitler or any other individual or group of individuals had or had not acted the way they did. Germany, facing the world in a realistic way, was proved, almost scientifically, to be justified in using ruthless methods—because of the energy and other characteristics of the German people they would necessarily acquire and should acquire a place in the sun greater than that of England, which was already inevitably on the downward path.

Langmuir "can see no justification whatever for such teaching that science proves that general causes (convergent phenomena) dominate in human affairs over the results of individual action (divergent phenomena). It is true that it is not possible to prove one way or the other that human affairs are determined primarily by convergent phenomena. The very existence of divergent phenomena almost precludes the possibility of such proof.

"The mistaken over-emphasis on convergent phenomena in human affairs and the reliance on so-called scientific methods have been responsible in large degree for much of the cynicism of the last few decades."

Although science is not capable of solving all problems even in the distant future, Langmuir, while recognizing that the field of science is limited, sees no grounds for discouragement. He recognizes that "in the complicated situations of life we have to solve numerous problems and make many decisions. It is absurd to think that reason should be our guide in all cases. Reason is too slow and too difficult. . . . What then must we do? Why not do what the human race always has done—use the abilities we have—use common sense, judgment and experience. We underrate the importance of intuition. . . . Since we have to live with our minds, we should train them, develop them, censor them—but let us not restrict them by trying to regulate our lives solely by science or

by reason." The importance of judgment, the censorship of minds, is not this where religion steps in? Perhaps Langmuir glimpses this for, in a final paragraph, he adds "Our morality is a kind of summation of the wisdom and the experience of our race. It comes to us largely by tradition and religion." There are those of us who insist that much of the wisdom and experience of our race traces back to the most divergent phenomenon of all history, the birth of a God-Man in a stable at Bethlehem; that is why the Catholic scientist must insist, with Professor Whittaker, that the necessary condition for the refounding of our civilization involves the reintegration of science into a unity with philosophy and religion.

HUGH S. TAYLOR.

The War and the High Schools

The war may become more
total in the schools than in life.

By George Johnson

THE American high school is the most indigenous unit in our school system. Sandwiched between an eight year elementary school that was made in Germany and a four year college largely borrowed from England, it is the creature of the nation's resolve to give as much general education as possible to the largest number of young people. It has dared to dream more bravely and more comprehensively than even Thomas Jefferson, whose faith in education as a bulwark of democracy was unswerving, yet who thought of schooling beyond the basic rudiments as a privilege of the gifted few.

Elsewhere in the world secondary education has ever been the badge of class distinction and has operated to perpetuate differences of status in the body politic. Fully aware of this fact, American education has resisted every trend that might create separatism in the high school population and has clung to the ideal of a comprehensive program that would provide a central core of studies that all students must pursue regardless of provisions that might be made for differentiation according to choice or competence. The aim has been to strengthen the common cultural bond that should unite academic minded students with those who feel the urge for vocational training, that should keep the intellectually gifted constantly aware of their kinship with those whose talents lie in other directions.

There are those who are convinced that the American high school has set for itself an impos-

sible task. They feel that in attempting to be comprehensive it has only succeeded in becoming superficial, that by aiming to give an advanced education to many who cannot profit by it the needs of the few who can have been slighted. They charge that in the degree that studies have been adapted to minds of lesser academic competence they have lost their power to challenge and discipline minds whose competence is greater. They admit that there has been some gain in extension but they insist that there has been a consequent loss in intension and a general leveling down of the national culture.

Such criticism has had little effect on actual practice in the schools. It runs counter to a conviction that is cherished by the American people. Fathers and mothers do not want their children deprived of the values that they believe are enshrined in academic education. Even when their boys and girls are evidently not destined for higher education, they demand for them something more than a schooling that is exclusively vocational or technical.

The program of the American high school responds to the wishes of the American parent. It strives to guarantee for all children, no matter what their future place in life may be, as much as possible of the learning which is called liberal, the learning which is worthy of free men and which alone is calculated to keep them free.

At the moment there is real danger that the tradition of liberal education in the American high

school may become a war casualty. The requirements of the armed forces, as well as the needs of industry, have just about snuffed out the light of higher learning in the colleges; the liberal arts seem to be out until the war is over. Whether or not this need have been it is not my purpose to argue here, but I do think that it is high time that the American people be made aware of what is beginning to happen in their secondary schools.

It stands to reason that a war of the magnitude and totality of this one in which we are engaged must profoundly affect every phase of our national life. The schools have not escaped its repercussions. The war reaches into our homes in varying degrees. Often enough there is the feeling of emptiness due to the absence of an older brother who is with the armed forces. Changes take place in the employment of the father or the condition of the business in which he is engaged. In many parts of the country mothers are finding employment in industry. Opportunities for jobs after school hours present themselves. For seventeen year old boys, and even for sixteen year olds, induction is just around the corner and this means a consuming interest in everything that concerns the army and the navy.

Under such conditions the regular routine of classroom work comes to seem very remote from reality. It lacks the glamor, the dash, and the sense of adventure that pervades out-of-school life. It is harder to study, harder to concentrate, harder to get the feel of the value of intellectual and cultural development.

Thus a very real problem is posed for the principal and the teachers in every secondary school. The boys and girls are thinking in terms of preparation for the service of their country either in the armed forces or in civilian industry. They are growing up and they have a desire to participate even now in the war effort in any way that they can. They are emotionally upset and find it difficult to put forth the sustained effort that is necessary for the mastery of such subjects as languages, literature, mathematics, the social sciences, and the arts.

The easiest way out would be to adjourn the normal curriculum for the duration and to gear the schools up to the war effort. Put emphasis on those subjects which immediately prepare the students for entrance into the armed forces or for some war job. Cull out those phases of mathematics, chemistry, and physics that are of direct application in military and industrial training. Lay the rest aside as a luxury to be enjoyed when peace returns. Languages, particularly the classics, can wait. If history and the social studies are to be taught, let them be reorganized on the basis of their relation to the war. Put the arts into cold storage until the dawn of a better day.

Happily, the number of secondary school princi-

pals and teachers who would agree wholeheartedly to any such solution is not very large. They are convinced that even in the midst of war our democracy cannot sacrifice the culture which gave it birth. They realize that they are faced with a tremendous problem of motivation, but they do not lose sight of the fact that they have a responsibility for educational guidance lest their students, due to immaturity and lack of experience, trade their cultural and intellectual birthright for the pottage of immediacy.

However, it is going to be increasingly difficult to hold the line for cultural education. The pressure is strong and various federal agencies are doing all they can to make it stronger. A whole series of pre-induction courses intended to begin the training of technicians for the various branches of the services and at the same time serve as instruments for "screening out" future inductees is being worked out by the army. The Civil Aeronautics Authority is preaching the gospel of pre-flight aeronautics for the high schools. The United States Office of Education is glorying in the fact that the federally sponsored program of vocational education has gone to war.

* * *

The United States Office of Education has another string to its bow. In the autumn of 1942 it began the promotion of the so-called High School Victory Corps. This began with an idea, innocent enough, of doing something to coordinate the demands that the various federal agencies were making on the schools. It has developed into something considerably more ambitious. Its aim is a two-fold one: first, the training of youth for war service after they have left school and, secondly, the active participation of youth in the community's war effort while they are yet in school. In an individual school the student population would be organized into divisions. From the civilian angle there is a Production Service Division and a Community Service Division. From the military angle there is a Land Service Division, an Air Service Division, and a Sea Service Division. In all of them the objectives which the Victory Corps would foster and promote are guidance into critical service and occupations, what is called wartime citizenship, physical fitness, competence in science and mathematics, pre-flight training in aeronautics, pre-induction training for critical occupations, community services, and military drill in uniform where possible on a voluntary basis.

At the start, the Office of Education insisted that the Victory Corps was no more than a suggestion that it was offering to the schools as to a possible way of motivating their work during wartime. However, as time has gone on, it seems that it is becoming something more. At the present moment there is a bill pending before the Con-

gress that would give to the Office of Education some \$12,000,000 to use for the purpose of assisting the states "to adjust the organization and curriculum of the high schools to a program for the preparation of high school students for wartime service." This will be accomplished by giving physical examinations to one-third of all the high school boys in the country and by attempting to improve and retrain teachers in such fields as physical education, pre-flight aeronautics, mathematics, physics, and chemistry, by means of teacher training institutes, demonstrations, and pamphlets. The bill also provides that the whole program would be controlled by the Office of Education through State directors of the High School Victory Corps and supervisors in the above mentioned fields, all paid out of federal funds.

Such pressures as these are hard to withstand. The federally sponsored programs appeal to students. There is something exciting about them and their values are more tangible than those which attach to the established program. They are in tune with the mood of the moment and by contrast they make Latin and Spanish and English literature and ancient history seem very useless indeed.

Yet these disciplines and all that they stand for are not very useless indeed. On the contrary, on their survival and the mastery of them by as large a proportion of our boys and girls as is possible the perpetuation of our kind of civilization depends. Anyone will grant that we need skilled mechanics in a mechanized army and navy, that we need skilled workers in our factories. But in our democracy these mechanics and workers even in wartime must be something more than robots. These soldiers of ours in airplanes, tanks, and jeeps, these sailors of ours living constantly with the intricate machine that is a modern naval vessel, these workers in our factories are first of all human beings. It is to make it possible for human beings everywhere to live as human beings that they are fighting and working. They themselves must not become dehumanized in the process.

The lights began to go out in Europe when the tyrants threw the culture of the ages out of the window and mechanized the schools. They wanted workers, not thinkers, pawns to push about at will, not dreamers. They feared the human quality in men and women and set out to eliminate all that would nurture it. They developed an education that was intended to guarantee economic production and military power. They wanted none of the learning that nurtures the flaming desire to be free.

Those who believe that our secondary education should be more completely mechanized remind us to the point of boredom that we are living in a technological age and facing an even more technological future. They fail to realize that for

this very reason lovers of human freedom must exert themselves to the utmost to preserve and perpetuate those educational values that are not technological. Man has fashioned the machine and perfected it marvelously, but he has not yet learned how to live with it. It has upset the whole economy of his existence, has laid vandal hand on every institution, has threatened to devour his cultural substance and reduce him to the condition of servitude to its purposes. What we have not yet learned is the art of living in a technological age in such a way as to develop our full potentialities as human beings. We see writ large in the story of the rise to power of the nazis in Germany how technological education can become a potent instrument for the enslavement of a nation; a truly liberal education could never be used for such a purpose.

* * *

It will be argued that the adjustment of the high school curriculum to war needs is only a temporary measure, that, once the emergency is over, the liberal studies will assume their accustomed rôle. The answer to this is that it may be a long, long time until the war is over; as a consequence, several generations of high school students may be deprived of the opportunity to become acquainted with our basic culture. Entirely apart from this, the question can be raised as to whether, when all is said and done, the regular high school curriculum with adaptations here and there to present circumstances may not after all prove to be a better preparation by far for wartime service than the courses and procedures that are being improvised to take its place.

One has every reason to wonder whether the armed forces will not have to spend much valuable time helping inductees to unlearn many of the lessons they learned while playing soldier in the high school just as industry so frequently finds itself handicapped by new workers who learn how in vocational schools.

Secondary schools throughout the United States have shown interest in the Victory Corps and in a great number of them the plan has been inaugurated. At the same time, however, many schools have preferred to work out their own salvation and have resisted the efforts of federal agencies to develop wartime curricula at the expense of cultural studies. That resistance will be strengthened and reinforced once the people realize what is happening. According to the law of the land boys are subject to call for military service when they are eighteen. Previous to that age they should be free to get as much general education as possible. They should not be forced to begin their military service in the high school.

Every federal agency in Washington tries to identify itself as closely as possible with the war effort, to become in effect a war agency, since this

enhances its prestige and gives it a priority when it comes to asking for additional appropriations with which it can build up a larger and larger personnel. The greater the appropriation and the larger the personnel, the more meddling there is bound to be in state and local affairs and the more interference with the activities of the individual citizen. In a field like education which is traditionally a state and local responsibility the results of this can prove very dangerous.

The High School Victory Corps, for example, as I have noted, began as a plan or a pattern offered by way of suggestion. In the words of the United States Commissioner of Education, it was supposed to be "simply a plan which in this time of national peril and national effort creates a nationwide framework of organization in which the schools may, *if they desire*, fit their various existing local student war organizations." In other words, it was merely a suggestion. Now the United States Office of Education wants \$12,000,000 to implement this suggestion. It wants authority to organize a flying squadron of federally paid and consequently federally controlled directors and supervisors in every State in the Union to try to overcome local resistance and, in effect, take over the direction of high school education until the war is over.

In the window of a certain Washington drug store there is a sign which reads, "We also sell drugs." It would be better for all concerned if the United States Office of Education would somehow develop an interest in *Education*.

What's Happening in the Colleges

By Harry Lorin Binsse

IT MAY seem a startling thing to say, but one of the best indices of what is actually being taught and studied in our schools and especially in our colleges may be found in what the textbook publishers are planning to do for any given year. Their choice of books is properly dictated by the starkest kind of realism; they do not make large investments in any text because they think its subject should be taught, or might be useful to American cultural life. Their first question about any new project will relate to the possibility of sales in actual flesh and blood institutions. Moreover, here is a much better index than any collection of college catalogues, or than the opinion of teaching staffs in individual colleges. We all know, who have had any direct experience with the matter, how universities like to make their catalogues good and fat and hence will list scores of courses which are almost never given and hundreds of courses which, if given, attract only ones and twos.

Obviously the war has played havoc with higher education. It seems likely that for the next few years—or, if you prefer, for the duration—there will be at most only 40 percent of normal college enrollments, and this 40 percent will be very nearly entirely made up of girls. The women's and co-educational institutions themselves report a 10 percent decrease in female enrollments, and the only men are those below 18 together with the halt, the maim and the blind. Up until the turn of this year there was real reason for alarm at the situation, for it threatened to leave our country with at least one college generation having no liberal training whatever, except for what might be acquired by youths under 18 and except for the feminine portion of the population. Such a loss could have very serious effects upon our future history, turning loose as it would a great mass of highly trained technicians with substantially no background in the humanities or pure science. We have had too much of this in recent American life, and it was a bitter thought to think that we were to have even more of it. However excellent and useful higher education for women, its effect on social life is very largely weakened by the fact that most women in time become absorbed by matrimony.

The textbook publishers have been well aware of what was happening. You have only to examine the books they are pushing. One of them writes to us that "the outstanding wartime development in the textbook field is the decline of the demand for books in the liberal arts and the corresponding upsurge of technical books. Revisions of books in the former classification are in large part being postponed for the duration, to make room for the expanding production schedule for the latter types. The emphasis is on textbooks in chemistry, physics, mathematics, engineering—those subjects in which the armed services are most keenly interested." This particular publisher reports that he expects to bring out 125 books in the technical fields during 1943. One of the largest of the exclusively textbook publishers is playing up nothing but books on physics, calculus, geometry, algebra, trigonometry, aeronautics—and a little number on Naval tradition. Gone are literature, philosophy, history—or so it seemed until the armed forces announced their college courses to be given selected candidates in 448 of our existing institutions of higher learning. The Air Force has already begun; the Army and Navy are to begin in July.

It has been suggested that the motive behind these courses is to withhold from active duty a large reserve of officer material, with the idea that the war is going to last for some time and that we must not shoot the works at the beginning. A good many thousand young men are therefore to be "screened" out in the Navy, the Army and

the Air Force, and quite literally sent to college. They may take courses lasting as long as three or four years. Some will be passed on to officers' training, some will be returned to active service as specialists. In all cases these young men will have to take basic courses in English and in American history. Since their college work is to be intensive, with mighty little time out for movies or bull-sessions or even soft-ball, let alone any sort of organized athletics, the time allocated to these basic courses is generous. It will be possible for the students to get through a pretty stiff amount of American history, and their English courses will include a spate of reading in such material as can tie in with their history work. The balance of their English training will be in reading, writing and speaking, all things which we suspect most high school graduates need even more than the facts of American history.

Of course the balance of these training courses will be principally scientific, intended to fit the student for the terrifically technical sort of war we are waging. Some will have a chance to study languages, and in a pre-chaplain course, the humanities will be given their proper status. By and large no one can pretend that these courses, designed by our military bureaucracy, and taught by existing college faculties, will have as good an educational effect in the broad sense as that which has been normal in American colleges before the war. Yet we may well be surprised at how good the results will be. For one thing the intensity of study, for another, the careful selection of candidates by "screening," which will be a far more objective method of choice than that prevalent in our recent past, may both yield welcome fruit. It is quite possible that the young men who have had two or three years of college work under Army and Navy supervision will come out better trained intellectually than their predecessors on these same campuses under a more easy-going dispensation. They will perhaps not have had the chance to absorb as much in the humanities as we might wish, but by the same token they may have been forced to acquire better study habits, better control over their native intellectual equipment than what we have been used to in college graduates.

In any case the publishers are now confident that for a few months at least there will be a big demand for college texts in American history, as well as for certain specialized books which they had never hoped to sell in quantity but which now happen to hit exactly on the nose the requirements of some one of the new Army, Navy or Air Force special courses.

And there is one firm which is really gloating, because it already had published a geography showing the sort of maps the geopoliticians, our friends the editors of *Life*, and the great and good Consolidated Aircraft Corporation have been

doing so much to make known to the public. It would scarcely be fair to single out this one firm for mention, but are they happy about their global and polar projections!

In all, no perfect picture, but several ounces better than we had feared.

Blackfriars' School

By DONALD ATTWATER

MANY interested in the Catholic schools of today are familiar with the English names of the Benedictine Downside and Ampleforth, of the Jesuit Stonyhurst and Beaumont, of the Oratory School (now conducted by laymen), which have attained a recognized place among our "public-schools." (Need I mention that what is called a public-school in England might in America be described as a "private college?"). And there are other schools, day and boarding, that endeavor worthily to uphold the Catholic educational tradition: Fort Augustus and Ealing, Mount St. Mary's and Wimbleton, Cotton, St. Augustine's and others. But for some time now an increasing amount of notice has been in a quiet way attracted by one not so well known as some of these, namely, Blackfriars School or, as it is usually called from its location in Northamptonshire, Laxton.

Its history goes back 280 years. During the "penal times" religious orders and Catholic schools were proscribed in England, and in 1660 Father Thomas Howard, O.P. (afterwards a cardinal), as part of his work of re-organizing the English Dominican province, founded a school under its charge at Bornhem in Flanders. It flourished greatly (lists of its eighteenth-century alumni are printed in volume XXV of the Catholic Record Society's publications), but the French Revolution brought ruin; the friars then found refuge in their own land, and the school was reopened at Carshalton, at that time an obscure village, in Surrey. From 1842 it was at Hinckley in Leicestershire until 1898, when it was transferred to Hawkesyard in Staffordshire; here it was housed in the mansion adjoining an important Dominican priory, whose establishment was due to the generosity of the famous potter Josiah Spode. Here the school began to recover its former prestige, and by 1924 it was necessary to remove it to the more commodious premises that it still occupies, at Laxton Park in a lovely district of the east midlands.

At this time it ceased to be, what it had been for a century, an "apostolic-school," i.e., one whose primary object was the education of boys who wished to join the Order of Preachers. Henceforward its aim was to give a liberal education and spiritual formation in accordance with Dominican tradition, to equip young Catholic Christians for, normally, life as laymen specifically in the particular "world" and phase of history that we find ourselves in.

There is a story that, not long ago, at a meeting of schoolmasters, a very distinguished prelate told the assembly that he found the spectacle of English Catholic education rather depressing, and that our best school was one

that most of his hearers never adverted to, viz. Laxton. I do not know if that anecdote be true, and I repeat it without any thought of disparaging other schools: but the fact that it is current suggests that there is "something about Laxton." There certainly is.

The first thing to note is its size and scope, in which respect it represents a type of school quite common when I was a boy forty years ago, but now, I believe, almost non-existent. It is neither a small preparatory school nor a big secondary ("high") school, but partakes of both. The number of boys is sixty, and no more; they range in age from ten years up to those of eighteen, who leave to go direct to the university or the workshop or the office. Its teaching staff is eight masters, all Dominican friars; the present headmaster is Father Henry St. John, and among his assistants is Father Gerald Vann, a name well-known to the readers of this review.

Obviously a school of this sort can develop a real family life of a kind impossible in the high school, because that is too big, and in the preparatory school, because that is a family with no "elder brothers." *

Laxton particularly stresses this point of age, from more than one angle. The sixth-form (as we call it in England) comprises boys who at sixteen have passed their matriculation examination, or its equivalent, and are staying on for two more years' work. They are the determining factor in a school's intellectual life, they set its tone and outlook. They are in the formative years when the mind is maturing, ceasing to be purely concrete and beginning to be able to think in terms of principles; they can begin faintly to see life as a whole, to grasp the correlation of religion with practical social problems, to realize the deep significance of such adolescent puzzles as sexuality. A school without a sixth-form is lacking one of its most valuable educative factors. Moreover, if a liberal education is to be effective, if a boy is to be properly prepared, spiritually and intellectually, to cope with the world of today, "it is absolutely necessary that his education should continue well beyond the age of sixteen." (Memorandum presented to the provincial chapter of the English Dominicans).

The value of this "family spirit" cannot be over-estimated, and Father St. John is quite right when he says it markedly distinguishes Laxton from most other schools. "There are no artificial distinctions. Fathers and boys, and older and younger boys, live in the complete equality of community life, difference of function being the only recognized distinction. By this means much of our education is done out of school by social contacts between Fathers and boys." In a small intimate circle such as this the "backward" boy can be given special attention, the psychological "case" is in a favorable atmosphere for getting rid of his inhibitions and complexes, class distinctions disappear, every ability—and not ability at games alone—gets its proper share of appreciation.

"The only sober educational theory for the Catholic today is a theory of revolt," says Father Vann roundly,

* Laxton is a boarding-school, as are so many in England. With the controversy "boarding" *versus* "day" schools I am not here concerned.

and the first subject of revolt must obviously be the imposed syllabus of studies and the external examining-board, which at present deprive schooling of almost all cultural value. But the revolt cannot be a sudden revolution. "A head master who replied blandly that he did not believe in the School Certificate Examination and would not have it in his school would very soon have to close down." However, adverse criticism of the present examination system, if still small, is growing; and Laxton, with the approval of sympathetic parents, is able to be feeling its way slowly and prudently towards a time when liberal education will be less fettered by the tyranny of a syllabus imposed by arbitrary examination requirements; when the young can be given a good comprehensive view of the world in general, showing the growth and decay of peoples and nations in the light of man's spiritual nature and eternal destiny, when the basic study of our own language can be fully directed, over a wide field of literature, towards the mastery of words as instruments which express ideas. And already Laxton does everything possible to get rid of the competitive spirit; there are no weekly marks and no prizes: "learning" must be pursued for its own sake.

We are educated, not by learning as commonly understood, but by doing—"that is, in my mind, the whole secret of education, whether in schools or in workshops or in life" (Eric Gill). And at Laxton this is carried over from ordinary school subjects to carpentry, gardening, printing and book-binding, radio fitting and photography, to the making of sets and costumes for use in school plays. And those plays vary from farce and light comedy to "Alkestis" and "Murder in the Cathedral." Free time for these activities, and for reading (there is an excellent library), is considered of the utmost importance, and for senior boys there is the Aquinas Society, an open forum for free discussion and criticism. Outsiders are often invited to address this society, and the present writer remembers with pleasure its intelligent reception of an informal talk he gave on the United States.

* * *

At Laxton religion is not regarded as the most important element in school life: "it is not regarded as an element in school life at all, but as pervading and informing the whole of life." Religious instruction has the first place in the curriculum, but it is wholly spontaneous and informal; it is made as unlike class matter as possible and is never the subject of examination. So far as may be, it is sought "to teach Christian doctrine in terms of life, to present the faith as something to be lived, both by the individual and by the whole community of school, family, nation and civilization."

In the matter of divine worship the family atmosphere is given its fullest play, and any suggestion of regimentation carefully avoided. The friars celebrate the divine office daily in choir; on Sundays and greater feasts the daily community Mass is a solemn Mass, on some lesser feasts it is sung, on other days it is always a "dialogue" Mass. But the only weekday service that is compulsory for the boys is Compline, sung by the whole school as night prayers; and there is no lining up to march to Mass on Sundays or other unnatural formalities of that sort, which can do so

much to make religion conventional and apart. Worship is consciously correlated with doctrine and conduct, and the social implications of religion fully emphasized, so that men may be produced "not only trained to know the truth but prepared to practise it, and by practising it to do the work of apostles in a world that greatly needs the apostolic spirit."

A point I wish to make above all is that the Laxton boys do not form a coterie of superior or peculiar persons, they are not "handpicked" before admission to the school. They are just ordinary boys. Nor does the school give itself airs or claim to be "progressive" or what not: if it makes any claim at all, it is to give a normal Christian education ("normal," of course, is not necessarily synonymous with "usual"). I have had the opportunity closely to watch its effect on a quite ordinary "modern" boy, intelligent, but not in a literary sense, interested above all in mechanics and flying, who might have become rather a "barbarian." Instead, Laxton (perhaps not unhelpt by his home) enabled him to "civilize" himself, without any distortion of personality or discouragement of his natural tastes. The effect of that influence was once summarized for me in a public church, when the boy was asked to serve Mass. He was of the type which might be expected to stumble through it shyly or to dash through it as a (subjectively) slightly distasteful, "old-fashioned" job. Instead, he served with a striking dignity, gravely, unhurriedly, deftly, in a clear voice: he was as fittingly "at home" in the sanctuary as in the cockpit of his airplane.

No visitor to Laxton, however casual, can fail to recognize that here is a Catholic school in no merely formal or denominational sense; an English school, too, in a great deal more than terms of legal citizenship; and a traditional school, in the seven-hundred year old tradition of the Dominican Order, old yet ever up-to-date, rather than in the century-old Victorian tradition of the English public-school. Those who would know more of the ideas and ideals behind it cannot do better than read the paper on "Some Aspects of Catholic Education" given by the head master, Father Henry St. John, before the Catholic Psychological Society; it was printed in *Blackfriars*, April, 1938, and I have made much use of it in this article.

Communications

AMERICA'S DAILY BREAD

Waltham, Mass.

TO the Editors: In the library this afternoon, I happened to pick up *THE COMMONWEAL* and read your editorial about the farmers and the food of the nation.

It is a pleasure to find your editor and the public in general coming to a realization that some of the things our farm organizations have been pounding at for the last eighteen months are really so. Your seven-point program is still some distance from the realities, especially as to milk. But we'll see things more clearly in a few months when the facts on food really begin to force themselves on our sensibilities.

What tickled me most about your editorial, however,

was its reference to the "rich farmers" who compose the Farm Bureau, "the East Prussian Junkers" you called them.

Having been a Farm Bureau official for twenty years, often with my very modest salary months in arrears, I would like decidedly to get acquainted with these "rich farmers."

Just for instance, I went to the last Farm Bureau Chicago convention with our Massachusetts delegation and their wives. All (except one who had to make a late hurried trip) rode in the sit-up day coaches all night both ways to save money; the entire Vermont delegation of 75 did the same.

The New Hampshire delegation traveled all the way to the Nashville convention and back by bus three years ago. Two nights on the road—real luxury, I'm sure you'll agree.

Here in the Massachusetts Farm Bureau, our state president is a man who started out as a hired manager for others (now he has a good-sized farm business of his own), his wife taught a kindergarten for years to help put their children through school and college. Our first vice-president is a one-man poultry farmer. His working force consists of himself, his wife and his mother. Our second vice-president is a farmer college professor (sure indication of wealth), an immigrant from Europe.

Our last previously and highly respected State Farm Bureau president was in debt for his whole farm when he started; he has told me often that his sole capital was his good wife and one old horse (and character, of course).

The Farm Bureau president before him was a one-man dairy farmer and the man before him a small fruit farmer.

"Junkers" all, I suppose?

Actually, the great difficulty we have is to find men for officers who can afford to make the sacrifice of leaving their own farm business enough to do the public work essential to office in any great farm organization.

Of course among our membership there are some wealthy gentlemen farmers; but if they achieve influence they have to be real men, for they have a considerable hurdle of distrust to overcome.

I am acquainted with quite a few of your 50,000 New York Farm Bureau folks, as well as the Farm Bureau leaders in the other Northeastern states: they are the same type of people.

But perhaps the rich "Junkers" are in the West and South. If so, they must bury their money: certainly their farm buildings don't show it. In considerable travel around the country, no part that I have seen has buildings that look as well kept as our New England farmers' that I have already told you about, except the Pennsylvania, Illinois and California, though I have no doubt there may be a rich farmer here and there in all states.

The trouble is, I suspect, Mr. Editor, that in spite of your "special sources of information," you are allowing your opinions of the 650,000 farmers who make up the Farm Bureau to be formed second-hand by some of the high-paid propaganda artists in Washington (some in government service) who appear to hate the Farm Bureau and all its works.

Come out to the American Farm Bureau meeting at Chicago next December and see and hear these farm folks for yourself. It will be one of the best weeks you ever spent. Or go right to the meetings of the County Farm Bureaus in your own great state of New York. I'll try to see that you get an invitation.

Leave that stuffy sanctum and get some county agent to take you around in the sun and onto the soil. You'll find some of the finest people, the most sincere, the most patriotic on God's green earth, but very few rich ones. You'll find they have real problems, not to be solved by propaganda, nor by official, or, I fear, by editorial pronouncements. Solved they must be! And, please God, largely under Farm Bureau leadership.

HOWARD S. RUSSELL,
Secretary-Treasurer,
Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation.

We were careful to specify only the Washington lobbyists of the Farm Bureau Federation as representing the "Junkers." (By the way: Junkers are not all rich; the German government on several occasions has had to give them handouts.) Will Mr. Russell explain to us their legislative activities as reported in congressional committee hearings, and will he explain to us Cotton Ed O'Neal? We may add that we emerge from our editorial sanctum fairly frequently, and will be delighted to attend any Farm Bureau Federation meeting to which we are invited. We know perfectly well that this organization in the Northeastern states, as well as its disaffiliated brother in Ohio, represent an altogether different type of farmer from those powerfully represented by Mr. O'Neal.—THE EDITORS.

"THE BETTER LIFE"

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In the review of my "The Better Life," appearing in the issue of April 2, page 595, Joseph Ascherl writes: "The author . . . elaborates every phase of the Rule of the Third Order . . ." This is not true. It is rather a popular theology of Tertiarism, proving with the aid of Holy Scripture and the Liturgy that here is in reality a superior life according to the Gospel, intended for the laity and secular clergy including the hierarchy and even the Pope. Such a theological exposition of the Tertiarism which is the most numerous (four million members) and the most fruitful in sainted members has not been written since its founding over seven hundred years ago.

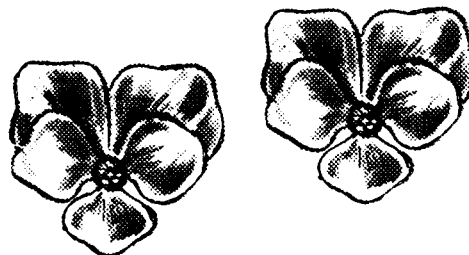
Mr. Ascherl, not distinguishing between religious orders, or communities living under vows, and secular orders, continues: "The Third Order is [not] an order, nor in canon law has it ever been reputed to be an order." Had Mr. Ascherl consulted the codex, he would have found the canon. Moreover the official title found in the Constitution revising the rule, issued by Leo XIII, reads "Tertius Ordo Secularis de Penitentia," and in his last encyclical on the Third Order, Pius XI stresses the fact that it is a *real* order.

Another error is contained in the statement: "There are only four canonical religious orders in the Church." He may have had in mind the four authentic and approved

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contrives not only to show the arrogant, devious traits warranted in his eyes by a loyalty which transcends ethical considerations, but more difficult than this he does not falter in making transition from his frightful state of blindness to a dawning understanding that his whole structure of beliefs must be revised. It is remarkable that he has succeeded so well in gaining audience acceptance of this change. The boy's conversion is dealt with in a rather heavy-handed manner in the last dramatic moment, but this must be attributed to a flaw in the writing which up to this very last instant proved most deft.

Ralph Bellamy, often cast in the movies as rather stupid, in this play portrays the professor with pleasant cheerfulness, which probably explains why the play is rescued from becoming a tract. Nancy Nugent, daughter of the director Elliott Nugent, was delightfully at ease, and I found her engaging at all times, though she stumbled over her lines once or twice.

By all means go. (*At the Ethel Barrymore.*)

JAMES N. VAUGHAN.

Listen to Britain

IF THERE are any who still doubt the importance of cinema as an artistic and educational medium, let them see "*Desert Victory*." Not that that is the main purpose for seeing this splendid English documentary film; but it is such a first-rate example of what moving pictures can do that I recommend it to all, and especially to sneerers at cinema. "*Desert Victory*" is the most impressive war film I have ever seen. In vivid pictures, made even more lively through a well-written but never verbose commentary and the intelligent use of music, it tells the story of the hard-fighting, victorious British Eighth Army as they chased Rommel and his Afrika Korps some 1,300 miles from Egypt to Tripoli last fall. Filmed by the British Army Film and Photographic Unit (of the 26 men and 6 officers on this job, 4 were killed, 7 wounded and 6 taken prisoner), this movie has amazing shots of real fighting, guns in action, the taking of prisoners, troop movements, planes and tanks in battle. Its high point is the night battle of El Alamein. The previous scenes have led us up to the battle by showing the preparations, the visit of Churchill to the troops in Egypt, Generals Alexander and Montgomery making plans, the complicated lines of supply, the severe physical training of the men, camp life in the desert with its hot days, cold nights, sandstorms, flies, "a place fit only for war." The commentary and the film's wise use of marked maps make clear the location of the troops and enemy and the plan of battle in such a manner that even Hilaire Belloc might envy the cinema medium. Then, as the screen is in pitch darkness, we learn that at zero minus 30 the barrage will begin. In dim light, we see the sweaty, expectant, surprisingly boyish faces of the men waiting to attack. FIRE! In the rapid flashes of the big guns, we see the men advance. The high note of a bagpipe mingles with the terrific battle noises. Soldiers go forward shooting. Others advance with mine detectors. Many are killed. Others take their places. The next day we see their dead bodies, wrecked tanks, burned planes. Day after day the battle continues. And after that battle

1500 YEARS AGO

IT SHOULD BE NOTED how astonishingly providential was St. Augustine's appearance at that particular moment of history. He was born in North Africa in 354. He was converted in September 386 and baptised at the age of 33 during the Easter of 387. He was made a priest in 391, the year before Theodosius became sole ruler of the whole Empire, and a bishop in 396, the year after Theodosius's death left the way wide open to the Barbarians. He wrote the *CONFESSIONS* in 399, having then been twelve years a Catholic and three years a bishop.

He began his greatest work *THE CITY OF GOD* as a consequence of the Sack of Rome in 410, as a reply to the Pagans who attributed the catastrophe to the anger of the old gods against Christianity. He died in 430 (two years before St. Patrick came as apostle to Ireland) while the Vandals were actually besieging his episcopal city of Hippo.

His immediate work against the Donatists, Manichees and Pelagians, great as it was, is as nothing compared to his function in the whole history of mankind. "He was, to a far greater degree than any emperor or barbarian war-lord, a maker of history and a builder of the bridge which was to lead from the old world to the new." (Christopher Dawson in *St. Augustine and His Age*.)

The Barbarian invasion meant two great severances; in culture it threatened the thousand year old Classical tradition, with which the new rulers had no hereditary contact; in religion it cut off the Western Church from the Eastern—the hierarchical breach was not to come finally for centuries, but the old closeness was at an end: and this mattered immensely, for it was in the East that the great theological thinking had been done.

Augustine prevented both severances—the severance of Western Europe from the Classical Tradition, the severance of the Western Church from its intellectual sources. In himself he summed up and by his prestige gave to the new Europe all that was richest in the Classics: "The course of studies which St. Augustine had described in his treatises *On Christian Doctrine* became the programme of the monastic schools." (Christopher Dawson as above.)

And in him the Western Church produced its first towering intellect—and indeed its last for another six hundred years. Just that one man, just when he was wanted. The great German non-Catholic scholar Harnack says: "It would seem that the miserable existence of the Roman Empire in the West was prolonged until then only to permit Augustine's influence to be exercised on universal history."

What he was to mean for the future can only be indicated. All the men who had to bring Europe through the six or seven centuries that followed fed upon him. We see Pope Gregory the Great at the end of the sixth century reading and re-reading the *Confessions*. We see the Emperor Charlemagne at the end of the eighth century using the *City of God* (that first great treatise in the Philosophy of History) as a kind of Bible.

As Christopher Dawson has said: "To the materialist nothing could be more futile than the spectacle of Augustine busying himself with the reunion of the African church and the refutation of the Pelagians, while civilisation was falling about his ears. It would seem like the activity of an ant which works on while its nest is being destroyed. But St. Augustine saw things otherwise. To him the ruin of civilisation and the destruction of the Empire were not very important things. He looked beyond the aimless and bloody chaos of history to the world of eternal realities." (*Ibid*)

If you wonder why that one man should have been able to send his message as far as we have seen that Augustine sent his, read the *Confessions* and find the sort of man he was. FJS

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*NOTE: A preliminary and abridged version of this translation was published in 1942 as a volume in the Catholic Masterpieces Tutorial Series.

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come others. Prisoners are taken by the thousands. The British advance; Germans retreat. All the way to Tripoli the camera follows the pursuit. Lt. Col. David MacDonald deserves major credit for this excellent documentary; but all connected with the film must be praised. It has been expertly edited, and each department of cinema contributed effectively to give the sensation of battle and the understanding of war. "Desert Victory" might well be set up as a model of war pictures. No feature film has been able to approach it.

Not really factual, but very interesting for its documentary aspect is "Next of Kin." This film made at the Ealing Studio in London carries a propagandic message that we Americans might well take to heart. Silence is golden, especially in wartime. Don't talk. Don't tell even small details about your friends in the Armed Forces. The enemy is always listening. And the enemy is very smart, and can put one-and-a-half and one-and-a-half together and what's more, can get three. The film has a simple plot which tells about the 95th brigade and its plans to raid a submarine base on the French coast. A private quite innocently tells his sweetie, a strip-tease dancer, where the brigade is going for special training. His sweetie and her dresser are SPIES. They tell Berlin who send agents number 16 and 23 to cover the brigade's movements. No. 16, posing as a soldier, is tripped up. But No. 23

works with a spy who has been long established as a book-seller, and he succeeds in getting the information on the planned raid. The brigade makes its raid, achieves its objective, but walks right into a trap—for the Germans are waiting when they land on the coast. Practically the entire brigade is wiped out. The camera shows hundreds of dead British as the commentator tells us that the next of kin will be notified. Because Thorold Dickenson has directed his film with extreme simplicity, because it has a large cast of unfamiliar faces, because the nazi spies are not spectacular, and because the battle scenes in the raid are realistic and harrowing, "Next of Kin" drives its message home with a punch. For American consumption, the picture should have been cut; the battle shots are repetitive; the whole film is too long for a non-fiction feature. It was made originally to show to the Armed Forces as a lesson. It proved so successful that it was exhibited to English civilians, who went for it in a big way. This was only natural for the film's details on how German agents work and how English counter-espionage is carried on prove unusually interesting. I understand there was much discussion before the British agreed to show the film here. Lest American audiences think the British are too casual about military secrets, the print now carries a prologue and epilogue spoken by J. Edgar Hoover who carefully explains that this is not a true story, but it could be. Although some of the realistic language of the original film has been cut out for sensitive American ears, "Next of Kin" still makes its point effectively. I hope those who see it consider this point carefully and shut their traps.

"Somewhere in France" illustrates well the main differences between the English and Hollywood techniques in film making. Hollywood would make an adventure thriller, call it "Desperate Rescue," show a handsome hero dashing over to France to save three important machines from the invading nazis. With some help from a second hero and a comedian, our handsome h., fighting every inch of the way, would rescue the machines, a glamor girl and a boatload of miscellaneous Frenchmen. It would all be unbelievably exciting as brutal nazis fall in hand-to-hand fisticuffs just like flies in Flit. And the film would clean up at the boxoffice. But this is not the way the English made this film, which in England was simply called "The Foreman Went to France." Produced by Michael Balcon, directed by Charles Frend, the whole thing has a nice quiet documentary air. This is due mainly to some excellent photography by Cavalcanti and the leisurely approach to the story. After an air raid, a couple of the boys in an English armament plant get together and tell this tale. Back in June of 1940, their foreman (played by Clifford Evans who is not handsome but who can act) realizes that three special purpose machines in Bivry, France, will soon fall into German hands. After bickering with English red tape and officious officials, he finally obtains a passport. He arrives in Bivry just after the order for evacuation has been announced. With the help of two British soldiers and a pretty American secretary, he snatches the machines from under the nose of a fifth-columnist French mayor (Robert Morley). The story wanders along as the foreman and his pals drive their truck through France to a seaport where

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they are rescued. The roads are blocked by confused evacuees; further confusion and disaster arise when nazi planes bomb the refugees. We get a definite impression that France at this time was a nest of spies and collaborationists. The film's fine photography, slow pace, understatement give one the feeling that much of this is really happening; however, H. B. Priestly's script has a lot of phoney dialogue that detracts from the realism. Constance Cummings plays the American girl like an English version of an American. Tommy Trinder, an eminently successful English comedian, has a brand of humor that falls completely flat in this country. I can't predict the box-office appeal of "Somewhere in France." Its message comes a little late and its execution is somewhat slow for American tastes.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Editors' Choice

ONE WORLD. *Wendell L. Willkie, Simon & Schuster. Pamphlet, \$1.00. Cloth, \$2.00.*

MUTINY IN JANUARY. *Carl van Doren. Viking. \$3.50.*

GOLDEN WEDDING. *Jo Pagano. Random. \$2.50.*

THE LAST OF SUMMER. *Kate O'Brien. Doubleday. \$2.50.*

PRAYER. *Thomas Verner Moore, O.S.B. Newman Bookshop (Westminster, Md.) \$1.75.*

Willkie Sees the World

WE USED not to think much of Wendell Willkie. In 1940 he seemed a symbol of big business and Republican reaction—a somewhat appealing symbol, it is true: tousle-headed, homespun, suffering from chronic laryngitis. Our sympathies were aroused, but we were against him.

In 1942 we liked him even less. Listening one night to a fight broadcast, we suddenly heard that eminent gravel-voice referring to Buddy Baer as Max Baer, repeatedly calling the champ "Joe Lou-ee," and winding up with a stirring reference to "the day when American democracy will rule the world."

Quite frankly, we thought to ourselves, "This man is a dope—and a dangerous dope at that. What kind of imperialist balderdash is that—'American democracy will rule the world'?" Subsequently, Joe Louis knocked out Buddy Baer in the first without even working up a sweat.

But Mr. Willkie, who had knocked himself out in our estimation, has now come back strong. On the basis of last fall's round-the-world flight he has written a very remarkable little book, "One World." It is not only a good travelogue; it is also a moving appeal for self-government among the peoples of the Far and Middle East, for the end of white imperialism everywhere, and for the immediate creation of international machinery that will learn to keep the peace by helping to win the war. We recommend this book very highly to all thinking Americans, and especially to those thirty-two senators who still have their feet on the ground and their heads firmly buried in the sand.

It must be that we misinterpreted Mr. Willkie's remarks at the Louis-Baer fight. Nothing could be clearer than this repudiation of imperialist modes of thought. Or

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maybe that trip did something to Mr. Willkie's own thinking machine, possibly when he was walking around upside down on the other side of the world. For there is little of the big business Republican in the following: "It is all very well to say, as some people did say to me in Cairo and Jerusalem, that 'the natives don't want anything better than what they have.' That is the argument that has been used everywhere for centuries against the advancement of the underprivileged, by those whose condition makes them satisfied with the *status quo*."

It is not just that Mr. Willkie is taking potshots at the British Empire—and please let's not swell up with anti-British self-righteousness. He knows—and we know—that the French and Dutch and Belgians and Americans, not to mention the Germans, Italians and Japanese, have been guilty of the same things, and frequently worse things. It is also useful to remind ourselves that American employers (including Catholics and including also ordinary homeowners who can afford a maid) do not hesitate to exploit Negro help or to discriminate against them, that some American clergymen and educators are known to do everything they can to keep Negroes out of their churches and colleges, that some American labor leaders still persistently refuse to admit Negroes to union membership or give them a raw deal once they are admitted, and that finally, American politicians in all evidence have no stomach for the fight to pass an anti-lynching law or repeal the poll-tax law or those other American laws that *even now* refuse citizenship to Chinese immigrants and refuse admission to Chinese women.

What are all these actions and attitudes but the most obvious, flagrant examples of the same white imperialism that first built and then rotted the foundations of the British Empire, that subtle poison that still eats at the heart of almost every white, telling him that black or brown or yellow men simply do not have the value of importance of a white man? We are all guilty.

In Russia Mr. Willkie showed the same tendency of other American capitalists to be over-impressed with success. So far Hitler has been a big success too. But we don't want to say that Stalin is no better than Hitler, and we do want to say that the following statement of the author's reflects a very intelligent attitude: "The best answer to communism is a living, vibrant, fearless democracy—economic, social and political. All we need to do is to stand up and perform according to our professed ideals. Then those ideals will be safe."

We used not to think much of Wendell Willkie. We think more of him now.

Patience Has an End

THE SORT of history Mr. Van Doren writes seems to us the best calculated of all to relieve the horrible tedium which has produced an instinctive revulsion against the history of our country so common in the schools where it is taught, and which in turn has done so much for the elimination of history as a formal subject in the high school curriculum and as a required subject in college. For Mr. Van Doren thinks it no disgrace to imply—in fact, explicitly to state—that Americans are not always heroes, do not always act in accordance with the implied standards of latter-day patriotic societies.

In "Mutiny in January" he tells the story of the revolt of those troops known as the Pennsylvania Line during the dog days of the Revolution. These men had been fighting faithfully for years. They had gone without adequate

food and clothing and supplies. They had not received even the inadequate pay they were supposed to get. And they had put up patiently with all this for months and months on end. Finally it got too much for them. They grew tired of unfulfilled promises from their superior officers—though they knew perfectly well that the officers did not intend to deceive them, but merely kept promising because there was nothing else they could do; the last thing in the world that either Congress or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania would get down to was providing for these troops, who were and had been bearing the burden of the day.

So their patience ran out, and this ragged host of tradesmen and farmers and journeymen and young boys—most of them not even born in the Colonies, but all of them beyond any accusation of being lovers of British rule—organized themselves, appointed themselves a new set of officers from their own ranks and marched off from Morristown to Princeton. They did it in good order, and without looting or any of the other forms of breakdown in discipline usually associated with mutiny. They made it perfectly clear that the moment the British in New York should try to cross the river and conduct an attack, they would fight. They were not going over to the enemy, but they were going to get what they conceived to be their rights. Days of negotiation followed. The leadership of the rebellious colonies were wise enough not to try to suppress this mutiny by force. All sorts of famous Americans and friends of America played their part, and eventually terms were settled, and the Pennsylvania Line was back in the fight more or less under its old officers.

Similar uprising occurred elsewhere, although this was the very type and pattern for all of them. In some cases force was used, but generally speaking reason won the day, and the materials for a strange page in the history of our country had been created.

When our youngsters read about the hardships at Valley Forge and later at other winter encampments of the Patriot Armies, would they not better understand how much these men suffered, and willingly suffered in the face of an ideal which has not yet come to pass, if they knew that at long last some of these very men had mutinied against the corruption and indifference which were already the worms in the core of the American apple? The Daughters of the Revolution tremble at any mention of such things, and yet one suspects that most of them have never had to exist in the dead of winter with "half-a-short" and with foodless, let alone meatless, days.

Adaptation

EVERY AMERICAN must be conscious of the millions of Italians who live in our midst and who are now turning out to be Americans just like the rest of us. Many Americans have certainly enjoyed the warm hospitality, admired the deep family feeling, savored the spaghetti and meatballs and slightly exotic pastries and the chicken cacciatori and the minestrone, all of which these good people have acclimatized in their new home across the sea. "Golden Wedding" is the very embodiment of the life of an Italian immigrant family from the first arrival of its Father, Luigi Simone, and later its Mother, to the successful absorption of their children in the American scene.

Jo Pagano has written no masterpiece; he does not go very deep into the heart or soul. Yet his book is one to

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entertain any American's leisure hours, and to warm any American's heart. Who could dislike such people? They are exuberant and sometimes vulgar. By and large, they are extrovert, although their hearts also can be moved, and deeply moved. But above all they harbor ill-will against no one, and they are deeply thankful for what a magnificent, rich and new country has done for them.

Mr. Pagano does not sound any depths, but he wonderfully recreates at atmosphere. The nearest he comes to going below the surface is in his treatment of Mrs. Simone's devotion to the Church. And the nearest he comes to tragedy is in his regret that no such deep faith carries over to the second generation.

There is no particular plot to "Golden Wedding." It is a short family odyssey. Luigi comes over and gets a job in the Rocky Mountain coal mines. He earns enough to pay back his passage money and meets Marietta. He "buys" her by paying back her passage money on a cost plus basis, and they get married. Gradually their economic condition improves, principally under the stimulus of her spurring. Luigi becomes a saloonkeeper, and then, with prohibition, the proprietor of a successful vegetable stand in California. All the time they are growing older, and their children are growing up and getting married and having children of their own. Suddenly it is fifty years since they were married, and a great celebration is planned for the event. And in an atmosphere of joyous tears the golden wedding is celebrated with due pomp and circumstance and plenty of food, wine, beer.

Yet we cannot be quite so abstract from the black realities of our day. The Spanish War, through the artist-son, casts its shadow over the closing pages, and we realize that the good life the Simones have achieved, have had given to them, is not an automatic thing, but a thing which eventually must be defended.

Mama's Boy

IT IS a rare occasion to encounter a Catholic novelist writing as a Catholic whom you can count on, no matter how minor the topic, to produce a work of art. Outside the field of the historical novel, there are probably only two figures we can think of in this way: Graham Greene and Kate O'Brien. The first few pages of any of their books indicate sureness of touch, a keen personal interest in every character and an awareness of the perennial human struggle between good and evil.

"The Last of Summer" does not tell of intense moral struggle, although the characters are conscious, as few of their contemporaries, of duty and sin. For Kate O'Brien it is a lesser effort although a genuinely fascinating performance. The background is the sudden meeting of two worlds, embodied in two cousins, one a Parisian actress, Angèle Maury, the other an Irish countryman, Tom Kernahan. The threat of the current war is always present, yet it is tempered by the confidence the Irish have that Eire will not be drawn into the struggle. Conversation on the subject is mercifully brief and does not sound—as it does in most modern novels—unnatural or written after the fact.

The subject of the book is a duel between an Irish mother and a Parisian cousin for the love of Tom Kernahan, the older woman embittered by the fact that she had once been jilted by the younger one's father. Tom does not show up so well when the chips are down, but remains handsome to the last. A number of readers will feel that

the decisive conversation between Tom and his mother is the story's weakest point, since what she says is not enough to produce the effect she seeks with such utter ruthlessness.

Hannah Kernahan is no antagonist to be taken lightly. She is handsome, cool and apparently unruffled by the most startling of developments. People often speak of her as a saint. That does not fool her daughter, Jo, who has made up her mind to enter a convent. And Jo tips the reader off. Cousin Angèle is too much of a woman not to realize early in the game how formidable an antagonist she has met up with.

Certain of Miss O'Brien's incidents would make excellent scenes in a first-rate Broadway comedy. There is, for instance, the time that Dr. O'Byrne, the bluff and genial local doctor, calls on Hannah to discuss the possibility of speaking to Tom about marrying his daughter, Norrie. The doctor is a bit heavy with the conversational foils but goes home highly pleased with himself. Another vivid scene takes place at the Snug, where barmaid Maggie May serves three of the cousins and proprietor Mrs. Cusack occasionally looks up from her copy of "Gone with the Wind" to settle things. In that Irish country community Maggie May misses very little, Mrs. Cusack even less.

Many other things could be said about "The Last of Summer," how vivid, how Irish and how Catholic it is, as far as the outlook of the characters goes. But it is the kind of craftsmanship which must be read as an integral whole to be adequately appreciated. It is a bit of modern fiction at its best.

Spiritual First Reader

ARE THE laity called to the devout life? Or is their proper rôle in the Church a comparatively passive one satisfactorily fulfilled if they attend Sunday Mass, avoid the grosser sins and contribute their financial support? A distinguished Benedictine psychologist provides a compact summary and illuminating interpretation of the Christian tradition in these matters in this inexpensive volume privately issued a dozen years ago and now made available for the general reader. He answers the first question affirmatively by pointing out that God is the end of all men and citing the first and greatest commandment, which is binding upon all of us. The Christian meaning of "charity" is, of course, wholehearted love of God.

How, then, do we go about seeking God? The Fathers of the Desert stressed absolute self-denial (in solitude and barren surroundings) as the means of removing all obstacles between the soul and God. Saint Augustine added the note of the intense effort of intellect and will needed to reach God. Saint Benedict taught the necessity of going back to God through obedience, with the whole round of monastic life in common (or for lay oblates, of Christian family life) as the means of attaining conscious and continued union with the Creator. And the author on several occasions recalls Christ's promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The saying, "If we wish to dwell in the tabernacle of His Kingdom, we shall never arrive there unless we run thither by good works," is from Saint Benedict. Also from the venerable Benedictine Rule: "willingly to listen to Holy Reading" (whereby God speaks to us) and "frequently devote yourself to prayer."

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rules for orders with solemn vows. If he intended to apply this evidently wrong statement to Tertiarism, he overlooked entirely the fact that the rules of the third orders are essentially the same as those of the first orders, with only the difference that they are adapted to seculars. Finally, he overthrows all he said by concluding: "It is definitely a rule of life . . ." In itself this is true. Tertiarism is a way of life for seculars; it is the only way of a regulated Gospel Life for seculars approved by the Church. It is the rule and its observance that creates orders, although in third orders the vows are replaced by the promise to keep the baptismal vows, and to achieve their keeping, the tertiary way of life is embraced as the better life.

THE REV. KILIAN J. HENNRICH, O.F.M.CAP.

The Stage & Screen

Tomorrow the World

IN A plausible manner an American professor formerly taught by a German master (old style), whom the Master Race slaughtered, managed to get custody of the dead man's twelve-year-old son, fancying he was providing shelter for the boy by bringing him out of Germany. His expectations are shockingly destroyed. The youngster is a convinced nazi, sure his father had traitorously betrayed the Third Reich and had ended an inglorious, cowardly suicide. The boy is anti-Semitic, arrogant and immunized against belief in every guiding idea, save the sanctity of the mystic demand for an omnipotent Third Reich, fulfillment of which justifies force, deceit, and even murder. He embodies a savage irrational orthodoxy gone mad.

The power of belief is a natural aptitude in man. It is at once his highest moral power and his point of maximum vulnerability to evil. When the subject matter of belief is unguarded by agencies of proved disinterestedness and when it is untested by criticism, it is likely to degenerate into something poisonous. In principle the nazi ideology is not a new thing in history, apart from the fact that it reserves its apotheosis for man in the mass while, in earlier times, when something human was made divine by act of the collective imagination it generally proved to be the person of a king, or at most a royal line. Whether one powerful man, one powerful family or one powerful people be made divine by human consensus, the result is always the same. Lawlessness is invariably permissible to these mock gods in the eyes of their creators.

The boy in this play is literally a devotee. He has ideas completely subservient to profound feeling, which happens to be similar to religious feeling. It is feeling perverted by attachment to a devilish object.

The action of this play, to the great credit of its authors, James Gow and Arnaud d'Usseau, unfolds with constant increments to an originally tense situation. The play called for and obtained exceptional dramatic talents, especially for the part of the child nazi, which is carried by a child whom critics are unanimously marking for his incredible talents. Skippy Homeier—such is his name—

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Carmel," by Saint John of the Cross. Saint Teresa of Avila beautifully expresses the need for "shutting the door against the world" that through the prayer of quiet we may undistractedly converse with God present in our own souls. In time this state is reached without conscious effort. Saint John's prescriptions for mortifying and calming "the four passions of joy, hope, fear and greed" are also quoted. "Strive always, not after that which is most easy, but after that which is most difficult" is the first of these.

The author indicates that an "Our Father" said vocally and with recollection can embody individual aspirations of the soul toward God and even in certain instances lead directly to contemplation of the Divine Presence. He cites Saint Teresa on meditation—that essential element for progress in the spiritual life—that we should meditate upon our Savior, "on His life and death and all we owe Him and let the rest be as our Lord chooses." On several occasions Father Moore recalls the fact that contemplative prayer is the end of man, as union with God in Heaven is our final destination.

One of his most beautiful citations comes from a letter written by Basil to Gregory: "What is more blessed than to imitate on earth the choir of angels, rising with the dawn to pray and adore the Creator with hymns and canticles; and then when the sun is shining brightly, betake ourselves to work, accompanying it everywhere with prayers, and as if with salt to season the products of our art with holy songs." The active and contemplative life thereby become one.

For two types of reader especially this volume is warmly recommended. For laymen looking for guidance or encouragement in their own spiritual life it will serve as an excellent brief introduction to the ascetical and mystical aspects of that vital quest. Anyone who wants to see beyond the Catholic façade (i.e., our "institutional" religion) to the purpose of it all, to glimpse what full Christian faith and charity mean, could scarcely do better than secure this admirable introduction to the subject of Catholic spirituality.

More Books of the Week

Liturgy and Personality. Dietrich Von Hildebrand. Longmans. \$2.00.

IT IS an interesting accident that "Liturgy and Personality" should appear at the same time that Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick's book, "On Being a Real Person," should be rising to the position of a best seller. Here are two outstanding interpreters, one of the Catholic tradition and the other of liberal Protestantism, writing on the same subject—and the contrast between their work well illustrates the tragic spiritual loss created by the Protestant Revolt. For the best that Dr. Fosdick can offer is exhortation to the person to achieve the Principle of Self Acceptance, to integrate himself and to develop a high degree of unity within himself and by himself. This introspection and character advance according to a formula foreign to the Catholic spirit. As Von Hildebrand states "The deepest pedagogical effect is achieved through that which is not used as a pedagogical means. . . . Thus the deepest and most organic transformation of man in the spirit of Christ is found precisely at that point where we purely respond to values, in the giving up of ourselves to God's glory. . . . As we pray and sacrifice liturgically . . . the spirit of Christ is imprinted upon us."

How empty all other "personality guides" become before the picture unfolded by Dietrich Von Hildebrand! Indeed, how soon personality analysis itself is forgotten in reading this work. What impresses is the beauty and splendor of the Liturgy. Primarily the book is a hymn to the Liturgy. It is only on second reading and reflection that one perceives the skill with which the author has illustrated the essential qualities of personality. Equally penetrating are his analyses of defective, incomplete and false personality traits. The whole is so concrete that the reader cannot fail to recognize himself and others.

A mere listing of the personality qualities of the Liturgy will explain little, but it may serve as a stimulus to read. The author begins with the judgment that the true personality is never solitary but, rather, deeply social, motivated by a spirit of communion which flows from his relationship with the Mystical Body. The spirit of reverence is the next quality, a reverence for all created things and in particular for those things for whom God became Man. The modern man with all his knowledge of secondary causes "is far more 'stupid' than the most primitive savage possessing reverence" and who therefore attributes all worldly events to God. The personality formed by the Liturgy recognizes a hierarchy of values ("If everything is placed in the same scale, even the greatest enthusiasm over a true value is but a fire made of straw"). The true person has the quality of being spiritually awake, that is, of seeing all things and dealing with all problems with a cosmic mind ("We know that Christ stands before us in our fellow men, but how many people do we actually behold in that light?"). He has the power of discrimination, which means the ability to discern "the dramatic

rhythm of being, of preparation, ascension, fulfilment, ripeness and decline"; and this quality is closely related to two others: a sense of continuity and of the organic unity of all things.

So much for the enthusiasm. It was followed for this reviewer by a letdown. Unavoidable questions pressed forward. Is Von Hildebrand's analysis but an ivory tower dissertation? If the Liturgy has this power, where is the evidence amongst us? It is an assumption—but a safe one—that Dr. Fosdick's work would ring closer to home for most of us than Von Hildebrand's. Dr. Fosdick speaks our language. But while we may be tremendously impressed by the brilliance of Von Hildebrand's work, we are uncertain about the realization of its purpose. For the language of the Liturgy is a dead language—and that presents a difficulty for the average Catholic. (Obviously, it is not an essential impediment.)

One ought to be satisfied and thankful for "Liturgy and Personality," and not use it as an excuse for bringing up the subject of the vernacular. But the book so stirred at least one layman that he believes that its greatest value will be the bringing to the fore in the United States the question of the vernacular in the Liturgy. English Catholics have been discussing it vigorously and extensively for some time (Cf. Michael de la Bedoyere, *Orate Frates*, March 21, 1943). It is significant that in speaking of the "spirit of continuity" in the Liturgy, Von Hildebrand never mentions as an example the Latin language which links us with the past. If it is of such little importance in the spirit of continuity, if it is such an unquestioned difficulty to "the state of being spiritually awake," it ought not be indelicate to bring the problem



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completely in the open. We can make a good beginning by re-reading the 14th chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, and especially those verses: "So likewise you—unless with the tongue you utter intelligible speech—how shall it be known what is said? For you will be speaking to the empty air. . . . I thank God that I speak with all your tongues; yet in the church, I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may also instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue."

EMERSON HYNES.

Years of Blindness. H. G. Quaritch Wales. *Cromwell.* \$3.00.

Pacific Blackout. John McCutcheon Raleigh. *Dodd.* \$2.50.

TWO books on the East—one by an archeologist, who thinks in centuries, the other by a journalist, who thought in seconds.

John Raleigh, CBS correspondent, arrived from Manila in time for the fall of the Netherlands East Indies and, like Cecil Brown, stopped off at Australia on his way home. His breathless observations have produced a breathless book, with the inevitable chapter on the censors. The first half gives you the feel, the color, the gossip and the preparations of the doomed East Indies. Competent and entertaining journalism. The second half on Australia also offers good reporting and some salutary criticisms, but in general Mr. Raleigh's attempts to interpret suffer from a lack of history. Even a minor error, such as the origin of "Digger" ("because Australian troops dug a good many miles of trenches in the last war," page 194) puts him out of court. A short course on the Australian gold rushes, the background of the Labor Party and the distinction between the British Empire and the British Commonwealth of Nations is earnestly recommended.

H. G. Quaritch Wales, an Englishman of Cambridge University, the London School of Oriental Studies and the London School of Economics, is a noted authority on the cultural problems of the East. From 1924 till the war, he lived and worked in India, Siam, Malaya, Burma, French Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies. He has been in the Siamese Government Service, made important archeological discoveries as Field Director of the Greater India Research Committee and in 1941 was attached to the headquarters of the 11th Indian Division in Malaya, barely escaping capture by the Japanese.

His long years in the East and his knowledge of the languages gave him a rare insight into the Asiatic mind. Drawing upon a quarter of a century's experience, this trained observer traces and documents two parallel and conflicting trends, first, the decline of the white man's influence in Asia and the disintegration of the old-fashioned imperialism; second, the upward surge of the Asiatics, struggling for freedom. The author lines up his conclusions in scientific manner:

The main underlying causes of the downward trend of the white man in Asia have been:

(1) The increasing lassitude and complacency of individuals resident in the East. This resulted from the growing ease and luxury of a life from which the hardships of pioneer conditions had generally disappeared. . . .

(2) There was a feeling both at home and in the East of satisfaction with the *status quo*, as a result of which colonial governments were lulled into a false sense of security . . . implicit trust in the strong arm of the British Navy . . . speed of modern communications . . . no feeling of

isolation and imminence of danger . . . no steps were taken to safeguard the overland route of aggression. . . .

(3) International strife among the white men in two world wars led to impairment of prestige in Asiatic eyes. . . .

(4) Failure of the liberal policy, whether of progressive preparation for self-government by large steps (British), by small steps (Dutch) or by the policy of assimilation (French). The liberal policy entailed ever increasing compromise and concessions, interpreted by the Asiatics as weakness and stimulating the growth of an active, militant nationalism in all the countries of the Orient. . . .

(5) An ever increasing aloofness of the white man from the Asiatic (author's italics), both physically and mentally, I consider to be, in view of the difficulty of overcoming it, the most serious omen for the improvement of relations between East and West. . . .

Turning now to the main causes of the upward surge of the Asiatics, we can distinguish two of supreme importance. They are:

(1) The mastery of Western material methods, thus pricking the bubble of white technical superiority, for on the spiritual plane the Asiatics had never felt any inferiority. From Persia and Turkey all the way to Japan, Asiatics wanted nothing from the white man except his technique. . . .

(2) Having passed successfully through the subservient imitative phase in the material sphere, there was a spiritual revulsion of feeling among Asiatics. They realized anew the value of their own cultural heritage which they had been temporarily willing to put aside. In India, Gandhi has been the great apostle of the revival of spiritual power. . . .

A brilliant, penetrating and disturbing book which should be studied by all post-war planners.

JAMES G. MURTAGH.

Essays in Thomism. Robert E. Brennan, O.P., Editor. Sheed & Ward. \$5.00.

"ESSAYS IN THOMISM" is the work of sixteen Thomists and is offered as a number of "samplings in the Thomistic synthesis." In the first essay, Father Brennan contributes an interpretation of the life and work of Saint Thomas Aquinas. He considers also the history of thought both before and after the thirteenth century and makes recommendations for the furthering of the cause of Thomism today. While the uniqueness of Saint Thomas is not overstressed by Father Brennan, the alleged general prevalence of error and decadence in thinkers of other schools is emphasized. The editor is not unaware of the failings of certain Thomists but he certainly does not digress to mention the merits of any non-Thomists. Many readers will be surprised to find Erasmus listed with Voltaire and Marx as evil modern influences.

In "Reflexions on Necessity and Contingency," Jacques Maritain, the unquestioned leader of modern Thomism, writing in his usual penetrating fashion, contributes an all-too-brief analysis of conceptions of the highest interest and importance.

Next are three essays, by Professors Rudolf Allers and John K. Ryan, of the Catholic University of America, and Father Hilary Carpenter, English Dominican. In "Intellectual Cognition," Mr. Allers presents an informative study. His preamble on the knowledge of the senses is really more developed than his remarks on intellectual knowledge. He is honest in mentioning unsolved difficulties but on certain crucial questions he does not make his standpoint and method sufficiently clear; he appeals to

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"confirmations" of Thomistic views found in modern psychology and, at the same time, seems to accept conclusions based largely on an authoritative interpretation of Thomism. Father Ryan, writing on "The Problem of Truth," explains some teachings of Saint Thomas and contrasts them with idealism and pragmatism. He finds these opinions to be "essentially skeptical" and holds that Thomism "not only includes all that is good in the other theories (of truth), but it has its own positive solution to offer." The author gives an interpretation of William James, according to which James "is ready to admit the existence of the absolutely false even as he denies the existence of the absolutely true." Unfortunately, it is plain that the text he cites from James does not substantiate this reading. Father Carpenter ("The Ontological Roots of Thomism") regards ontology as "the science of truth," for, according to him, the object of ontology is the objective truth of things, or "being as such." "Being as such" is declared to be both a "concept" and a "reality." The conception of reality in this context is not further elucidated. The writer has chosen to treat of these questions without going into the doctrine of analogy.

The next four essays, primarily historical and exegetical in exposition, are by Professors Riedl, Pegis, Bourke, and O'Neil. These are all capably done and deal with the following topics: the nature of the angels, the doctrine of *habitus*, prudence, being and unity in the thought of Saint Thomas.

Professor Mortimer J. Adler contributes an important and closely reasoned paper, "A Question about Law." He argues that the word "law" is not used univocally in the expressions "natural law" and "positive law." A recognition of this, according to Adler, is indispensable for a clarification of the contemporary discussion concerning the character and importance of natural law.

A large part of the second half of the volume consists of essays whose purpose is to apply Thomistic methods and doctrines to practical concerns, such as economics (Monsignor John A. Ryan), government (Father Walter Farrell, O.P., and Professor Yves R. Simon), education (Father Robert J. Slavin, O.P.).

The final essay, by Professor Emmanuel Chapman, deals with "The Perennial Theme of Beauty and Art." In his interpretation, the beautiful is "a transcendental, common to every being, as common as unity, truth, good . . ." Beauty in God, in nature, and in art, and their interrelationships are considered, but little analysis or demonstration is attempted, the truth of Saint Thomas's *obiter dicta* on the subject being assumed throughout.

The volume concludes with an "Epilogue," by Herbert Thomas Schwartz, O.P.

What is lacking in the present volume is any extended consideration of questions of speculative philosophy in a mode at once analytic and demonstrative. Important philosophical problems which today engage the attention of philosophers are scarcely touched on. If we may trust the index to the volume, James and Bergson are mentioned only twice, Marx, Hegel, Dewey, Santayana once each, while there are no references at all to Bradley, Royce, Peirce, Russell, Whitehead. No contributions deal with the contemporary discussion of the philosophy of science, the philosophy of religion, or the philosophy of language. On the other hand, history, and the application of philosophy to questions of law, politics, education, economics are represented.

If contemporary Thomism is to receive a hearing in the

world of today, the history and applications of Thomistic philosophy are not enough. Thomism must enter into the discussion of current problems in speculative philosophy with greater energy. Recognition of the merits of "Essays in Thomism" must not keep us from being aware of the great amount of essential work which remains to be done.

WILLIAM O'MEARA.

Children Object. Sabra Holbrook. Viking. \$2.00.

"TELL ME what that book is," I said to a college woman. A glance brought the comment: "One of those Commando books telling you how to train your children to be guerillas."

Sabra Holbrook has made copy out of the "Youth-builders," who follow a new set of occupations: they collect fat, tin cans, scrap, act as salesmen-extraordinary, dismantle automobiles, discipline parents and teachers. As Newbold Morris is chairman, the book needs no reviewing, except that it is a kind of offense against the literary idiom. . . . "Establish early confidence," says Sabra, "by using their idiom." "Snazzy" means *swell*; "schnazzy" means *lousy*. "Mellow" means *tops*. Being "hep" means having accurate information. Crackerjacks, stinkers, plenty exciting, roam the pages. Don't correct bad grammar or you'll interrupt the free flow of thought. Their slogan: "Join our salvage team and kick Hitler in the pants."

"Treat them like adults and expect them to behave accordingly." Sabra brings order to a crazed club meeting by mounting a desk and intoning, "Pipe down, kids." They "piped." After Isaac had sold a \$5,000 war bond he sought to employ his talents more widely, went to Saratoga races and raked in cash from drunken gamblers, complained that the hotel "did not cooperate" by feeding him before or after meals. He feared to visit his grandfather lest in his absence another "Youthbuilder" would beat his sales record. The "kids" are from grade school to junior college. "When they realized that our aim was not to take their games away from them, we got complete co-operation. . . . White and colored children doing the lindy hop together."

This book I don't like. I yearn for hope and the human feeling of a helping hand, not sending the "kids" backward to the ape and the tiger. Such books seem more important for what they reveal than for what they accomplish.

ELLA FRANCES LYNCH.

It's Your Souls We Want. Stewart W. Herman, Jr. Harper. \$2.50.

THIS STORY of the ten years' conflict between Paganism and Christianity inside Germany is one of the most significant contributions to current world interpretation. The author, from 1936 to 1942, was pastor of the American Church in Berlin.

As a Lutheran, Stewart W. Herman is especially interested in the resistance of the German Protestants to a Nazi church and to the infectious danger of Nazi bacilli within their own church. His position is wholeheartedly with the brave refusal of the Confessional Church to accept the opportunism of the so-called "German Christians." Only one chapter of his book (17 pages out of 296) is devoted to the fight of the Catholic Church against Hitler. However, the author proves well informed and without prejudice on Catholic conflict with the Nazis. He emphasizes the high degree of active collaboration between the Catholic and Protestant clergy. He once heard Niemöller

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CATHOLIC EDUCATORS

—and others can help in the campaign to continue the flow of new readers by sending the names and addresses of three friends they know want to be in the know to Room 508, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

make a frank statement to the effect that he felt spiritually closer to a certain Catholic bishop than he did to a certain nazified prelate of the Protestant Church. Indeed the Protestants, much more endangered by nazi influence from within the churches, cannot but envy the unshaken and unshakeable Catholic opposition to Hitlerian ideology.

Herman insists that the resistance of the Christian churches is one of the most important factors in the present world situation. If Hitler had succeeded in converting the German clergy, Europe's "New Order" might appear in a more conciliatory light. It is interesting to note that the prophets of the nazi new era appear to have expected from other peoples the honor which they had not received from the German churches. At any rate they began their administration of conquered lands by courting the church, which could be of tremendous help in pacifying an irate populace. But warned and encouraged by the fight of the Christian forces in Germany, the clergy everywhere refused to follow the offered ways of compromise.

Since Pearl Harbor no mail has reached me from Germany. But while I was writing this book review a Swiss magazine arrived including by some happy coincidence "Zeugniss der Kultur" (Testimonies of Civilization), the most recent splendidly illustrated book catalogue of Herder, the largest Catholic publishing firm in Germany. Nothing in this booklet recalls the Swastika. Among the books advertised are "Sieg über das Böse" (Victory over the Evil) by Lothar Schreyer, "Geschichte der deutschen Seele" (History of the German Soul) by the Catholic philosopher Gunther Müller, a new interpretation of Saint Paul by Josef Holzner, a profound history of the Reformation in Germany by the Catholic historian Joseph Lortz, which has been highly praised by the German Protestant writer Paul Fechter. This catalogue seems to me a document irrefutably proving that the Christian German culture is still alive. We should not overrate the effects of nazification. Inside the German soul the forces of fifteen Christian centuries are not yet extinguished.

MAX FISCHER.

Man's Poor Relations. Earnest Hooton. Doubleday. \$5.00.

IF YOU have a longing for books that are comprehensive and if you are willing to forgive all other failings, then by all means get Hooton's book on primates. It covers primates from the lemur to man and deals with the morphology, sociology, ethnology and psychology of each type. It is promoted as an authoritative scientific treatise adapted to the lay reader. That it is relatively sound and relatively authoritative is above question. However, it is also dry, dull and uninteresting. The scientific layman would do well to spend a night on a rental cop before spending money to buy. The high school biologist will find this a valuable reference work.

J. MC A. KATER.

Herself. Elizabeth Jordan. Appleton-Century. \$3.00.

A DELIGHTFUL BOOK to hold in the hand; not in the head. Not but what they're noble souls. The "chief" who wouldn't marry lest he become too absorbed . . . "in my own private life." One seems to have known some people who not marrying, but never mind!—Eve Bruce who was, after all, no useless creature. Even Aur Abbey, surely the most innocent first degree murderer in history!

Our compliments are due to printer and binder.

EDWARD L. KEYES.

The Inner Forum

Vernacular in the Liturgy

THE LAST issue of *Orate Fratres* reported a tremendous interest in England in the question of introducing more of the vernacular into the Liturgy, or public worship of the Church. There are, of course, many arguments against it, particularly if one were to go so far as to advocate the vernacular throughout the Mass, the Office and the *Rituale*. There is something tremendously fitting about the fact that the whole world over the Roman rite is in Latin—a universal language which does not change the way common tongues do from age to age. In certain parts of Europe where nationalistic feelings run high, the introduction of the vernacular would lead to endless disputes. And there would be problems involving Gregorian chant and many other difficulties.

On the other hand the advantages of more complete understanding and more consciously personal participation in the official prayers and rites of the Church are undeniable. Use of the missal has grown considerably here in the United States in the past ten years, but it does not take much observation to realize how few American Catholics actually "pray the Mass" with the priest on Sunday. When it comes to the rites of Baptism, Marriage, Churching (itself an observance all too little known) or even Extreme Unction, the layman often feels completely lost. How much can be accomplished by the teaching of Church Latin to those who would make the necessary effort? Are there certain portions of the Liturgy which might be more effectively rendered in the common tongue of the land?

Ultimately this is a question for the ecclesiastical authorities, but that does not mean preliminary discussions leading up to a formal petition may not be instituted. That is exactly what is happening in England now, for a group of seven priests and eight laymen have written the *Catholic Herald* about it, proposing the formation of a "Correspondence Circle" for study and research. The signatories "are all agreed in desiring some extension of the vernacular." Interest in this movement is growing in this country too.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Dr. Edward L. KEYES, one of the original founders of *THE COMMONWEAL*, has long continued to contribute articles and reviews.

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